

Travels in Virginia in Revolutionary Times

By A. J. MORRISON.
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No. 7.
A Summer at Bath—1791.
In the year 1791, there was published at Paris a book written by a retired captain of artillery, Ferdinand Marie Bayard, described on the title page, "A Journey into the Interior of the United States, to Bath, Winchester, the Shenandoah Valley, etc., etc., During the Summer of 1791." It is strange that this book has not been translated, as it is interesting as a sort of sentimental journey of a very intelligent man (member of the Society of Sciences, Letters and Arts at Paris), who visited a spot not often mentioned by the early traveler in this country. Captain Bayard was born at Mantes-la-Jolie in 1758, and was living in 1836. He was in his twenty-third year the summer 1791. He had already retired from the army and become a traveler in various parts of the world. Captain Bayard seems to have landed at Baltimore, with his wife and small boy. He remarks, "the month of June, July and August are bad for children if kept in town in this country." Bath, situated 120 miles from Baltimore, and near the Valley of the Shenandoah, offered a stopping place in the country and a point of departure, from which to visit that fertile region, where, beneath skies almost always serene, the inhabitants cultivate a generous soil, which rewards liberally the slightest efforts of human industry. I wished to see this promised land, from the bosom of which an innumerable population is beginning to arise, prosperous and content, and already passing the limits of the Valley to occupy the vast spaces beyond. Besides, before returning home, I desired to gain a knowledge of the American people, and this I could better compass in the country than in the towns. For the trip I hired a carriage at Baltimore, at 11 francs the passenger, baggage included. The owner was the driver, and a very skilful one, as we learned on the road, which is often abominable and extremely dangerous.

Four miles south of the Potomac by way of Elliott's Lower Mill, Elliott's Upper Mill, the Red House, the Monocacy River, Fredericktown, Middletown and Hagerstown, we arrived at Bath, in Virginia. The town is situated in a triangular and very narrow gorge. The mountains to the west are high and steep, and in the month of March snow and earth become loosened from the declivity and descend in avalanches. The houses built next to this dangerous mountain are protected by heavy palisades. Several parties, having neglected the precaution, have had their houses engulfed. The residents boast of the climate—the winter not too cold, and the heat of summer moderate. Bath has two public buildings—the theatre and the bathhouse. The first is a log edifice, and the second a framed barracks, partitioned into eight cells, in each of which there are steps arranged for the convenience of the bathers. The spring is hard by. This water is dispensed in a goblet by the man in charge of the water, is clear, lukewarm, and insipid, but very efficacious.

I have seen many come to Bath fearfully rheumatic, who had to be carried to the spring at first, and in three weeks were able to walk with a crutch. Bath was formerly called Warm Springs. The name was changed in deference to the English resort. This imitative mania is a bad symptom, and augurs ill for that nation, whose name is dear to lovers of liberty everywhere. At Bath the young women ride about a great deal, and are excellent horsewomen. It is to be remarked that their physiognomy is distinct among American women. During the fall boats come to the river from Alexandria and Georgetown, and return laden with grain. After that season there is no more traffic by water until the spring, and if any one has neglected to provide himself, he must make a trip to Winchester for supplies, thirty-nine miles off. The inhabitants of this region are very fond of the English boxing match. Generally a bruiser (breaker of bones) is in charge of these combats, who sees to the strict carrying out of all the regulations.

At our boarding house (excellent fare) there were about forty people, among them two Virginians—Madame B. and Madame A.—who spoke French tolerably well. Madame B. had read the works of Swedenborg, and entertained us with descriptions drawn from those mystical books. There were several very pious people at our boarding house, one of whom had a theory that eating was not to satisfy the appetite. I noticed that he ate a great deal. At Bath it is the custom to drink tea at 5 o'clock. Everything is very ceremonious. At the right of the lady dispensing tea are ranged in a half circle all the other ladies. A profound silence follows the entrance of each invited guest; all the ladies as grave as judges on the bench. A small

acajou table is placed before the dispenser of tea. Silver pots contain the coffee and the hot water, which serves to weaken the tea or to receive the cups. A domestic brings on a silver waiter the cup, the sugar dish, the cream pot, the butter balls, the thin slices of ham. A Frenchman is embarrassed at the necessity of watching his cup and saucer in one hand, and with the other receiving a tart or a slice of very thin ham.

In sending back the cup the spoon must be placed in a manner to indicate whether you will begin again, or have finished drinking. A Frenchman on one occasion, unfamiliar with English and ignorant of this polite sign language, was overcome at seeing the sixteenth cup arrive, which, having emptied, he hit upon the device of stowing it in his pocket, dreading a seventeenth. The tea dispenser, and consumed, there are songs. Made-moiselle L. was the accomplished artist at Bath. Her favorite song was one of a certain Patrick, who, absent, was still to be remembered.

We had at Bath a troupe of Irish comedians, alternately emperors, shepherds, clowns, and no doubt very badly fed. The young man who played the lover found great difficulty in pronouncing his consonants. A tall, thin man played the tragic role of enraptured prince. A blonde soubrette was solemnly coquettish. The others of the troupe were scarcely to be recalled. We had tragedy, comedy, comic opera, and farce. Every week there was a dance. Billiards was an amusement, and there was play at the tavris, particularly after the arrival of a gentleman who kept a Pharaoh bank. He was treated with great courtesy, and I heard nothing said against his Froby. Nevertheless, it happens that the planter who arrives at Bath with equipage and attendants goes home with nothing but a horse, and a very mean horse.

I hired a horse to go to Winchester. For more than half of the way the country is wild. As you draw nearer the town in the Valley, many well-stocked farms appear, the land being very fertile. On the slope there range strong, long-wooled sheep, not afraid of wolves during the summer. Such war is made upon the wolves that even in this heavily timbered country there is little danger from them except when the snow lies deep upon the ground. It is a magnificent country, about Winchester. The mountains are made of strong constitutions, and ruddy. The horses and cattle have the eye and the gait of health. I stopped at a tavern kept by a German, who has made a fortune in the business. I was treated with consideration for having lived at Strasburg and for having crossed the Rhine. At this tavern there is a good cook, the meat is excellent, there is game and fresh-water fish; the house is well furnished, wines of every country, good linen, good beds, the rooms well lighted, and the whole at a reasonable price. The day after I arrived there came to the town an old gentleman limping from the gout. I mentioned Thomas Payne to him and the "Rights of Man." He fixed me with his eye, cut the air with his stick, and said vehemently that he wished Thomas Payne was hanged. He left me, and at the same time I got up, whistling the air of "Ca Ira." I learned that cause of his behavior; he had held a lucrative office before the war, and was an incurable Tory.

A Mr. Smith, who lives a mile from Winchester, asked me to dine. I spent the time very agreeably there. From the liberality of his opinions I was led to discuss the political situation of America with considerable frankness. Mr. Smith and his brother-in-law accompanied me back to Winchester, discoursing by the way of their fortunate lot, of the progress of agriculture, and of the richness of the inexhaustible soil, which yields an abundance to the inhabitants of this beautiful Valley. I had a letter of introduction to Colonel P., formerly aid de camp to General Washington. Colonel P. lives some sixteen miles from Winchester, greatly esteemed for his public and private virtues. On the way to his house I passed through a country of abundant harvests, fat pastures and well-peopled; where there was forest the trees were of a magnificent growth, and in the intervals a deep green turf invited the traveler to repose. It was hot. I dismounted beneath a poplar tree, the white flower of which offered its corolla to the bee and the humming bird. The coolness of the place, the delicious perfumes exhaled by the acacias, the ivy, and the flowers springing from the sod, all gave to the senses that calm which is the precursor of sleep, but ideas of the happiness prepared for generations to come in this land of peace and plenty, thoughts of the future greatness of the American people, supplied a reverie sweeter than that of dreams.

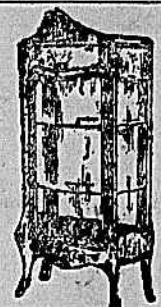
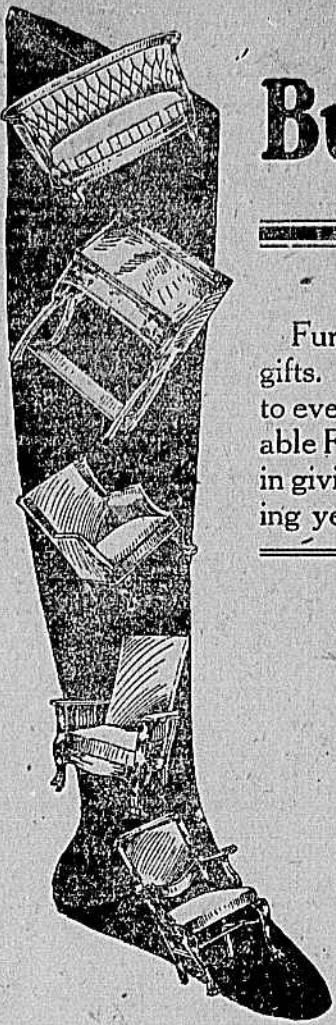
Not far from the house of Colonel

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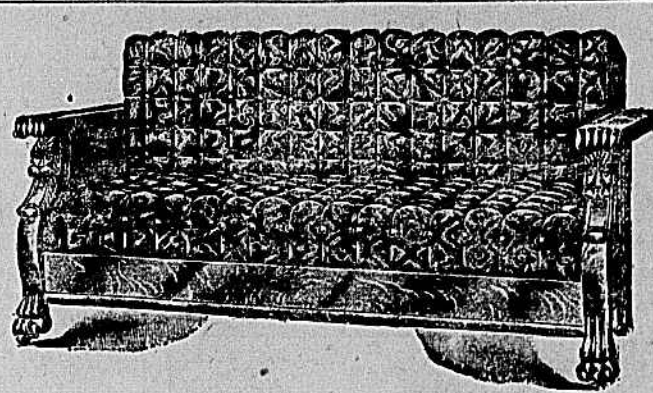
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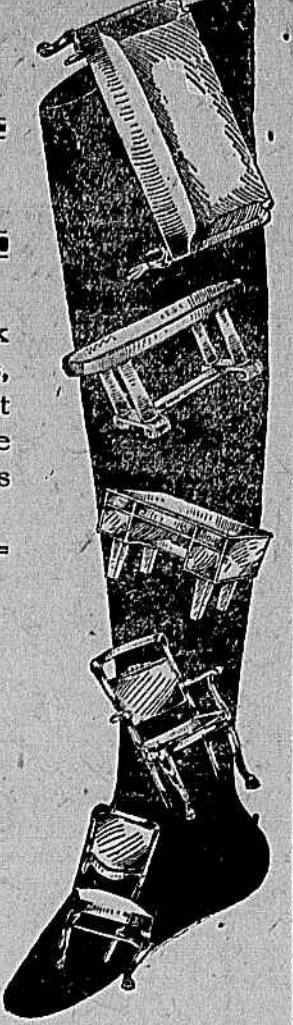
Why not give a Parlor cabinet? We have them here at from \$10.50 to \$80.00. As a special we offer a very pretty Mahogany Parlor Cabinet, with mirror, back and worth \$18.00 for \$11.75.



\$28.75 buys this large massive Solid Quarter-sawn Oak Davenport Sofa Bed, heavily carved ends and claw feet; can be used as a bed at night and a davenport during the day, and would cost you elsewhere \$45.00.



\$1.95 buys this exact Solid Oak Dining Chair; best construction and neatly finished; worth \$3.50.



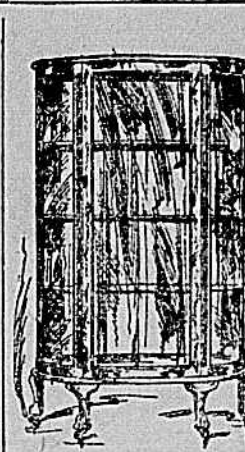
Morris Chairs \$7.75

buys this exact Solid Oak Morris Chair, an exceptional value; has spring seat and reversible velvet cushion; cost you elsewhere \$12.00.

\$3.98 will buy a very neat Solid Oak Morris Chair; worth \$7.00.



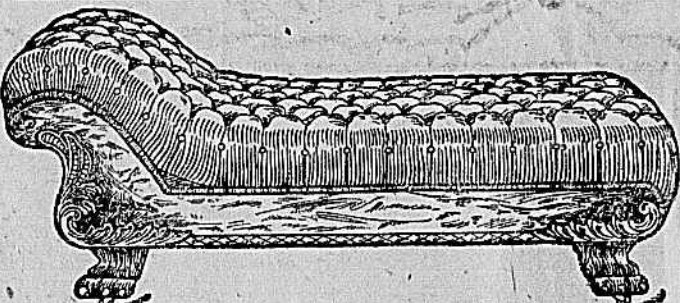
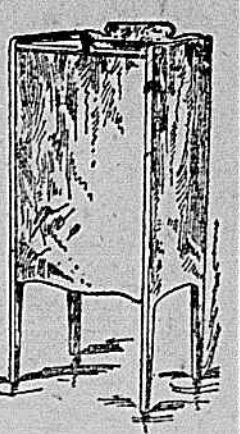
\$2.95 buys this exact Rocker, solid oak, and nicely finished; worth \$4.00. \$1.75 buys a very neat Solid Oak Rocker that usually sells for \$3.00.



\$22.50 buys this exact Solid Quarter-Sawn Oak China Cabinet; a very neat design; has bent glass doors and also claw feet.

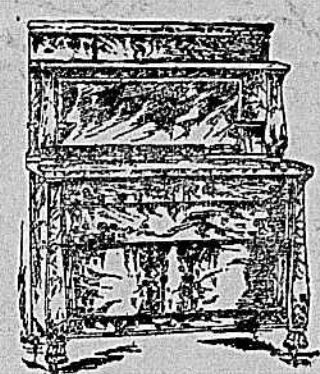
\$11.50 buys a very neat Solid Oak China Cabinet; worth \$18.00.

\$7.75 buys this very neat Mahogany Music Cabinet, highly polished case and worth \$12.00. Others up to \$35



Couches in Great Variety and in Every Style of Covering

\$20.75 buys this exact Genuine Leather Couch, solid quarter-sawn oak frame, polished; best all-steel construction and worth \$35.00.



\$49.50 buys this exact \$65.00 Solid Oak constructed oak, polished; a very neat design, but heavy and massive.



\$8.75 Buys this exact Ladies' Desk, Worth \$13.50. A very pretty Desk, and would make a very acceptable gift. Others from \$3.95 to \$35.00.

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RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

P. I met a large man on horseback, whose open countenance was an invitation to talk. He was dressed like a farmer during the busy season. I asked him the way. He showed me the road, and continued his path without adding a word to the precise answer he had given me. Arrived at the barn, I found the overseer near the barn directing some negroes who were shelling corn. I had not been long in the house, a structure of logs, and very comfortable, when there entered the same man I had met in the road, none other than Colonel P. himself. I presented my letter, which he quickly read, and receiving me in the most friendly manner, offered me refreshments. We talked of the war, and he sketched for me in brief his causes. At dinner I drank old whiskey distilled on the place. The colonel spoke with pleasure of his farm operations; he makes everything at home. He showed me the plan of his 1,000 acres, at the centre of which he will build a large and commodious house. At the present time his outbuildings are more carefully constructed than his mansion. I quitted Colonel P. at sunset, much pleased with him, and grateful for his kind attentions. Shortly after the moon appeared over the mountains to the south, and cast a light over the valley. The whippoorwill commenced its plaints, almost extinguished by the various song of the melodious mockingbird. The blacks were coming in from the fields singing behind the slow horses fatigued with the day's work.

The next day at Winchester I went to church, a frame building, and hitched around it horses of price well caparisoned. The negroes sat in the gallery, dressed in their Sunday clothes. Below were the masters and mistresses, whose appearance proclaimed them alive to the sanctity of the place and to the solemnity of the ceremony. The minister, a Presbyterian, was the grandson of a Frenchman. Coming back from church I observed the mat doors of all the houses were closed. They remained so throughout the day. Mrs. B. and her daughters retired after dinner to read chapters of the Old and the New Testament. Throughout

the United States this is the manner of observing Sunday.

The Valley of the Shenandoah is a most prosperous and healthful region. Tobacco, corn, flax and wheat are the principal crops. Twelve miles from Winchester I could have bought land for 50 shillings the acre, but nearer the town the price of cleared land is from three to four pounds. Several Europeans who have settled hereabouts have not succeeded well, and for the reason that they failed to discard European customs. It should not be overlooked that the price of labor and that of produce is in reverse proportion to what prevails in Europe. The labor is high and market values, not low. An especial error of foreigners is the attempt to improve too fast. A Frenchman who bought 300 acres of land thinks he has a "property," and goes to work on the grand scale. What with building and embellishments he is very apt to go bankrupt. There are men in this region who have made fortunes in land speculation. There is not a tavern where they prevail in Europe. The land may not be found. They are as enthusiastic in their offers as the women who sell toothpicks at the doors of

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Paris restaurants and cafes.

An especially pleasing feature of their preliminaries is that they assure you their only motive is to make your fortune. I met one of those merchants who desired to enrich me, no less, by selling me land at an excessively high price.

Winchester is destined to be a manufacturing town, and to a degree calculable as soon as communication with the Atlantic coast shall have been established by means of the rivers or by canal. Already there is a famous carriage works at Winchester; and there, which, for use and for style of workmanship, equal in those lines the product of the older cities.

I set out from Winchester for Bath at 4 o'clock in the morning, in order to be on the mountain before the sun was too high. A light fog covered the Valley, resembling transparent gauze, through which appeared the tops of trees, houses and cabins, the cabin chimneys already smoking. I observed that the squirrels were early awake. Coming to Bath, I found the great subject of talk was a duel lately fought and announced in the Gazette.

Weldon Social News.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] WELDON, N. C., December 19.—Miss Kate Harvey, of Raleigh, who has been the guest of Miss Mary Clark, has returned home.

Miss Eppes Collier Kavan, of Petersburg, after a pleasant visit to the Weldon, has returned home. Invitations have been issued for the marriage of Miss Pennie Ward Daniel, sister of Mrs. J. M. House, of Weldon, to Rev. Robert Reginald Fleming, of Streator, Ill., the wedding to take place at Greensboro, on December 23d.

Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Fausch, of Portsmouth, Va., have returned home after spending a few days at Halifax with Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Wilcox.

Mr. Quinton Gregory has returned home after spending three years in China in the interest of the American Tobacco Company.

The steady evening of the commissioned officers of Company K, North Carolina National Guards, gave an enjoyable luncheon to members of the company and a few invited friends. The menu was very beautifully served, and all present spent a delightful evening. Rev. H. A. Wells, who recently re-

signed the pastorate of the First Baptist Church here, will preach his farewell sermon Sunday. He will return to his former home at Bowling Green, Va.

Mrs. A. C. House and little daughter, Florence, spent a few days with friends in Richmond, this week.

Mr. W. L. Scott, head bookkeeper for the Weldon Lumber Company, was called to Petersburg this week on ac-

count of the death of his father, Mr. W. H. Scott.

Miss Cookie Midlin has returned home from a visit to friends at Enfield.

Senator W. E. Daniel was in Richmond this week on legal business.

Rev. S. E. Mercer, the newly appointed pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church here, will preach his first sermon Sunday, the 27th.

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